In the summer of 1940 the United States debated how it should respond to the threats Germany posed to its security.¹ A military policy question as old as the republic moved to the headlines: should all Americans heed the call to arms, or should a small corps of professional volunteers bear the burden of defense? From the days of the War for Independence, Americans have asserted that every social class bear its fair share of military service. No social class or section should be exempt, nor should any group bear a disproportionate share of military service.² How successfully did the Pennsylvania National Guard meet this ideal as it prepared for war in 1940 and 1941?

The country has in some cases met and in others fallen short of this ideal during the wars of the past two centuries. It dismayed the people of the Revolutionary generation when it appeared that the rank and file of the Continental army were disproportionately unpropertied men from the lower classes, because Americans believed that citizens from all ranks ought to join the army and fight for the
cause. During the War of 1812, individual states made great if unsuccessful efforts “to ensure equity in militia service.” The Union army during the Civil War fairly represented a cross-section of the male population. For instance, the social profile of Pennsylvania soldiers during the Civil War approached the ideal. Comprehensive conscription ensured a similar equity during World War I, when military service was “based upon the principle of universal obligation to service on the part of all male citizens or friendly aliens.” A U.S. Marine writing in 1935 opined that the soldiers and sailors of the U.S. military were “connected in no way with any one region or caste, but constituting in fact a cross section of the whole population.” In the Second World War, the sheer size of the country’s armed forces as well as Selective Service resulted in equitable burden sharing. Inequities that resulted arose mainly because the country had chosen to defer certain groups of skilled workers for the good of the war effort as well as to maintain racial segregation, but not from an effort to protect privileged classes from military obligation.

The American public has remained concerned that the makeup of the rank and file of the all-volunteer armed forces bears a strong resemblance to the nation’s ethnic and class composition. Following the implementation of the all-volunteer armed forces in 1973, for example, numerous policymakers, politicians, and scholars discussed how representative and equitable the military rank and file ought to be. During the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan complaints arose as months of service in remote desert posts strained the lives of National Guardsmen mustered to active duty. Many still see advantages in fielding a military that reflects a cross-section of the American population. These concerns grew in 1940–1941 as the Pennsylvania National Guard, namely the 28th Infantry Division, readied itself for mobilization into federal service.

The importance of Pennsylvania to the American war effort during World War II is well-established. It provided 10 percent of the twelve million people who served in the armed forces, and several generals. Pennsylvania Guardsmen fought the Germans to a standstill in the Battle of the Hurtgen Forest in November 1944, and ruined the German army’s operational plan during the Battle of the Bulge the following month. The 28th Infantry Division was one of eighteen National Guard divisions in the fall of 1939. Far from being a haven from combat duty, these units went into battle side by side with their regular Army brethren as early as September 1942 when the 32nd Infantry Division of Michigan and Wisconsin began fighting the
Japanese on New Guinea. In 1939, the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General George C. Marshall, considered the National Guard to be "the first line of the Army," but at the time it was just a collection of semi-trained soldiers.

Pennsylvania's 28th Infantry Division, originally known as the National Guard of Pennsylvania (PNG), had been in existence since 1879. Two of its component units, the 109th Artillery Regiment and the 104th Cavalry Regiment (First Troop, Philadelphia City Cavalry), date from the Revolutionary War. Federalized in 1898, the division saw action in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Known at the time as the 7th Division, the PNG patrolled the Mexican border in 1916, and on the Western Front it fought in the Aisne-Marne, Oise-Aisne, and Meuse-Argonne offensives, suffering 14,000 casualties. Coming from a large wealthy state, the PNG carried a lot of clout on the national level. In fact, its adjutant general in 1939–42, Major General Edward Martin, was the president of the National Guard Association, an influential Washington, D.C. lobby. He routinely corresponded with General Marshall.

The German invasion of France in May 1940 jolted the United States into action, setting off a frenzy of public discussions as to the size and mission of the armed forces. Proponents of an all-volunteer military opposed instituting a draft, while others more alarmed by events overseas campaigned for a conscript Army that would distribute the burden of military service across class lines.

Historians cannot fully assess the equitability of U.S. military service without first discerning who served in the armed forces in terms of class, race, education, employment, and social standing. Analyzing the social profile of World War II soldiers with quantitative evidence, however, is problematic. One article in 1947 surveyed demographic trends among World War II soldiers, but it lacks documentation. Privacy laws prohibit researchers from analyzing most existing World War II enlistment records that survived the 1972 fire at the National Personnel Record Center in St. Louis. This article will shed light on the social profile of Pennsylvania National Guard enlisted soldiers at the outbreak of World War II through analysis of 1,988 enlistment forms from 1938–1941 available at the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg. This collection is all that remains, and is large enough to analyze the nature of the division, which numbered 11,709 officers and men when federalized on February 17, 1941.
The sample size, two-ninths of the total division, compares favorably with another study of enlisted troops, John Robertson's analysis of western Pennsylvania soldiers during the Civil War, which employs a sample of 1,355 men from four regiments and fifteen companies. Each PNG enlistment record from 1938–1941 contains data on the volunteer's residency, employment, years of employment, years of education, birthday, and dependents—enough information to allow one to draw conclusions on the soldier's social class and reasons for joining the National Guard. No study of this nature has yet been conducted on a World War II unit of this size. The sample is limited to volunteers because draftees did not join the National Guard; the War Department placed them in the regular Army.

Interestingly, the draft affected the PNG's recruiting efforts in 1940–1941. As debates over Selective Service raged, enlistments in the PNG climbed somewhat in June, 1940 then fell for the rest of the summer as young men of the state waited to see whether conscription might be in their future (Figure 1). Before the year was out, Selective Service provided an indirect boost to National Guard rolls. Upon enactment of the Burke-Wadsworth Selective Service Bill on September 14, 1940, draft-age men began enlisting in the PNG in greater numbers in October.²⁷

![Figure 1: Enlistments. Source: Record Group 19.124, Pennsylvania State Archives.](image-url)
This proportional relationship between conscription and volunteering was nothing new. The United States had first exploited the threat of compulsory service to boost voluntary enlistment during the Civil War, when people considered being drafted a badge of shame. During World War II the Army did not use the draft just as a prod to persuade men to volunteer; it drafted millions. As soon as conscription became a certainty, the PNG took advantage of the draft to encourage men to volunteer for National Guard service instead.28

The PNG employed two primary arguments in their recruiting drive. First, they asserted that National Guard service was superior to conscription into the Army. Second, localism was central to the PNG’s recruiting effort. A man could join a nearby infantry company or artillery battery and serve with men from his home town, or wait and take his chances with the draft board.29 Time was of the essence, since President Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilized four National Guard divisions on September 16, and voluntary enlistment certainly was superior to the draft.30 Newspapers supported the PNG recruiting drive: “Young men joining the 109th [Infantry Regiment] will be among friends and commanded by officers from the region. They will be more at home than in other outfits. These considerations, aside from the training and discipline they will receive, should weigh heavily in any decision they may make regarding enlisting.”31 The Canonsburg Daily wrote, “By volunteering for the National Guard, he will be able to pick his associates.”32 Volunteers would remain in the state at the Indiantown Gap Military Reservation in Annville, where they could visit family members and girlfriends on weekends.33 “Enlist with us and be with your friends,” urged the 109th Infantry Regiment.34 The 107th Field Artillery Regiment concluded that its “publicity campaign, stressing the advantages of service in home town units, has brought dozens of men of draft age to it.”35 Particularly before the fall of France, PNG companies often cited the fraternal nature of armory life as a recruiting inducement.36 The 111th Infantry Regiment argued that by joining before federalization, men would gain a leg up on later recruits. Furthermore, a Guardsman was obligated to fulfill only two years of Reserve service after the year of active duty, while the conscript would face an inconvenient ten years in the Reserves after a three-year obligation. One would even learn a useful trade, and if one desired military service, what advantage was there of waiting for one’s draft notice?37

Radio advertising was a common recruiting tool that several regiments employed.38 Armories appealed over the airwaves to young men’s patriotism; the 109th Infantry Regiment called for “good, red-blooded Americans.”39
Companies portrayed their membership as exclusive, and exploited local connections. PNG leaders noted that “Social affairs and ceremonies attended by local officials, wives, mothers, and prospective recruits On Invitation Only have a distinct value and must be arranged by the local officers” [boldface in original]. The sources do not conclusively reveal how effective these recruiting techniques were, but they highlight the values the PNG leadership thought their target audience possessed.

The desire to retain the local identity of the units clashed with the Army’s need to allocate personnel according to their military skill. “With the regiment brought up to its full reserve strength of 1,900 men and officers, enlisted from local communities, it will retain its identity,” so wrote the 109th Infantry. But service with fellows from home would not last. Shortly following the division’s mobilization on February 17, 1941, Selective Service assigned so many conscripts to the division that their numbers fell to a large minority. By early 1942 the division started providing cadres for new Army divisions and personnel for the Army Air Forces by the hundred, making necessary the intake of even more draftees. Once in federal service, the National Guardsmen belonged to the federal government, and could be sent to any unit the Army saw fit.

A direct relationship existed between National Guard volunteering, world events, and domestic policy. Enlistments rose briefly following the invasion of Poland in September 1939. A similar increase occurred when Germany conquered France. A short, sharp spike in PNG enlistments followed the implementation of the draft in the fall of 1940, but the relationship between the draft and volunteering became most evident as the 28th Division’s federalization date of February 17, 1941 approached. Once it became public knowledge in October that the War Department was going to mobilize the PNG that winter for a year of service, enlistments picked up. January and February 1941 were the last opportunities for men to choose to join the 28th Division of their own volition. Enlistments peaked sharply right before February 17. Volunteering for the National Guard was a last act of personal sovereignty for these men in a country moving systematically toward full mobilization.

The passage of Selective Service helped PNG recruiters overcome one of their most difficult recruiting challenges: the conflict between National Guard service and civilian employment. In the spring of 1940, stories circulated that Guardsmen across the country suffered “reprisals” from employers for time away from work completing Guard training. Men either resigned or refused to enlist in the first place if they believed they would be fired from
their jobs. Numerous men with families to support resigned from Guard units across the nation lest they find themselves with no job when released from a few months of active service. Community, and employer support in particular, was absolutely necessary for the Guard to retain its soldiers. Many employers became more flexible following the passage of the draft. Congress passed laws requiring employers to re-hire mobilized Guardsmen once they returned from duty.

Guardsmen supported Selective Service because it kept the Guard from enduring an unfair proportion of the burden of military service—a national outlook in spite of their state pride. For instance, a vocal opponent of total reliance on a volunteer Army, Colonel Eric Fisher Wood, commander of the 107th Field Artillery Regiment, ridiculed congressmen in the summer of 1940 who sought to “give the volunteering system a trial first.” Wood railed that the volunteer system was insufficient for raising a mass army, and he was adamant that a draft was both necessary and fair. Everyone, he believed, ought to share the burden of national defense. Under the pre-draft system, the most patriotic and sacrificial, the National Guard volunteers, would shoulder the weight of defending the country while others retained their jobs and stayed at home with their families. “We are too few,” Wood wrote, “to meet the problems and must demand that all citizens be called to serve with us in preparing for the threatened crises.”

The citizens who volunteered for the Pennsylvania National Guard shared a number of characteristics. Above all, the great majority came from the urban working class. Of the entire sample, 1,345 (67 percent) worked as unskilled laborers, while 33 percent (643) held skilled, clerical, or professional jobs. Rough comparisons reveal that in terms of employment the enlistees diverged significantly from the rest of Pennsylvania’s working population. U.S. Census records, which provide labor information in much greater detail than simply “skilled” or “unskilled,” show that 44 percent of Pennsylvania’s male labor force consisted of skilled labor. Only 8 percent, or 161 individuals, of the PNG volunteers were skilled. More specifically, just eighteen recruits had been electricians, only twenty worked as carpenters, while sixty had been mechanics. Twenty-three percent of the PNG enlisted force, numbering 458, worked at white-collar, mainly clerical, jobs, compared with 17 percent holding such jobs statewide. Two percent (40) held professional or executive-level jobs, as compared with 5.6 percent for the state. Within the unskilled segment of the recruits, 398 listed “laborer”—the most commonly listed job. Clerk was the next most frequently held position.
at 158, followed by student (120), truck driver (102), and salesman (69). Only 29 enlistees were farmers—1.4 percent—compared with 4 percent of the state's male population who engaged in some sort of farm work. Nine (0.4 percent) of the volunteers were lawyers, matching closely the 0.3 percent statewide. Small numbers of recruits held jobs in numerous other fields. There were, for instance, two bartenders, a milkman, and a steel miller.54

The high percentage of unskilled workers among the enlistees can be explained at least in part by their youth. Normally one enters wage labor at the apprentice level, working one's way up to skilled positions.55 Thus, many of the young enlistees who held unskilled jobs would have ascended into skilled labor later in their thirties and forties. Therefore, their actual social class leaned more toward skilled labor than the employment statistics indicate. Reflective of their youth, the soldiers averaged only 3.9 years of work experience, with a mode of one year.56

Data are unclear on the number of soldiers who were unemployed, because many recruits wrote nothing regarding their employment status. While some marked "unemployed," others suggested that they were without work by not listing a job. Those who filled in nothing for their career have been counted as unemployed, because if they had had a job, they would have listed that position as their career. On the other hand, some may have written the title of the last job they held. An unemployed truck driver could have written "truck driver" as his trade. Therefore, 227 jobless recruits—an 11 percent unemployment rate—is probably a low figure. The state unemployment rate at the time for males fourteen and over was 17.7 percent, including those in public works projects.57

Looked at another way, approximately 89 percent of the recruits had jobs when they enlisted. Most men did not join for economic reasons, and in fact, enlistments increased even as the demand for civilian labor grew. The unemployment rate did not correlate with enlistments, which spiked after the invasion of Poland, subsiding only for the December-January 1939 holidays. Enlistments took off once the War Department implemented Selective Service in the fall of 1940.58 These figures indicate that men were not exploiting the National Guard as a last choice means of employment, and that the PNG's rolls were not filled with the chronically out of work. Their behavior contrasts greatly with previous wars. From the Revolution to the Civil War, economic incentives were a key aspect of recruiting. The Army offered bounties to potential soldiers, either in the form of land grants or cash signing bonuses.59 The employment status of the 1940–41 troops, combined with the
growing economy and the proportional relationship between the worsening of the war and the rate of enlistment, indicate that the PNG soldiers volunteered so as to participate in national defense, especially after a one-year mobilization became certain. Money was not an incentive for joining the PNG in 1940 and 1941, as volunteers received no signing bonus at all.

Indeed, a man enlisting in the PNG was accepting a huge cut in pay. Mobilized privates made $21 a month. If inducted to federal service after four months of weekend Guard service, they received $30 a month. While the wages PNG soldiers had received as civilians varied among the regiments, the men's civilian earnings put them above the state's average. Soldiers of the 109th Infantry Regiment, for instance, averaged $52.88 a month in their civilian jobs, while Headquarters troops averaged $105.84, even though there was little variation in the types of jobs they held. The overall average in civilian wages for the PNG was $86.40 but this is a deflated statistic because enlistees in Troop A of the 104th Cavalry did not report their wages. Since its members held high-paying jobs, the actual PNG average was higher. The mode of the division's monthly civilian wage is more informative at precisely $100 a month, or $1,200 a year. This was considerably higher than the wages of many Pennsylvania men. In 1939, the Census reported that the highest number of employed urban males statewide (545,854) reported an annual wage of under $100, and the next highest number of male workers (253,647) earned $600–$799. Thus the average civilian annual wage of the PNG enlisted men was higher than that of many urban wage earners in their state. The 1938–41 enlistment data confirm assertions that as far as the PNG was concerned, the World War II American military underrepresented the lowest socio-economic strata of the population. The Pennsylvania National Guard was not an army of the underclass, but instead consisted of solidly educated working class men, virtually all from urban areas.

The soldiers the PNG recruited were well educated for the day. They had completed on average eleven years of school, while the mode was twelve. Forty-eight of the sixty-seven companies, troops, and detachments examined also had a mode of twelve years of schooling. Exactly 50 percent of the soldiers, 993 of 1,988, had finished at least a high school education. In comparison, only 11 percent of males statewide aged twenty-five and older had completed four years of high school. Eighteen percent of the enlistees had achieved education beyond high school. Seven percent, comprising 150 soldiers, had graduated from college. One-fourth (37) of these men were in Troop A, 104th Cavalry. PNG volunteers compared favorably to the pre-war
regular Army, in which "some 31 percent had less than an eighth grade education." Only 3 percent of the PNG enlisted men had less than an eighth grade education. Overall, the Pennsylvanians were following a national trend; the educational level of new soldiers throughout the Army was on average much higher than that of the established peacetime enlisted force.

Troop A offers an unusual study for, not surprisingly, its enlists averaged fourteen years of schooling. The mode for Troop A was sixteen, which equates with four years of college, and most of its soldiers were college graduates. Fifty-five Troop A men out of ninety-eight for whom there are enlistment records signed on between November 1940 and February 17, 1941. Judging from their neighborhoods, jobs, and education, nearly all were from affluent families. They lacked previous military experience. Seventeen of the ninety-eight were from locations as far away as Phoenix, Arizona, and Palm Beach, Florida, suggesting that the troop held a nationwide attraction among a certain class of individuals. In fact, it had long been an upper class unit. Time reported that “its rolls are almost synonymous with the Philadelphia social register.” Why men enlisted in the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry is uncertain from these records. In all likelihood, most of these men shared social connections; momentum developed to enlist in the elite Troop A before it was federalized and became subject to personnel assignments directed by the War Department.

Several men made considerable financial sacrifices to enlist in the PNG. A lawyer from Greensburg joined the 110th Infantry Regiment as a private. Another attorney signed on with the 112th Infantry Regiment’s Company D while France collapsed to the Germans. It was not that unusual for the economically advantaged to leave the comforts of civilian life for military service. Ten members of the House of Representatives, for instance, either left office to serve in the military after the Pearl Harbor attack, chose not to seek reelection so as to fight, or entered military service following electoral defeat. Henry Cabot Lodge resigned his Senate seat to serve in the Army.

While the PNG had long claimed that it had scores of troops with many years of military experience, the training and experience of its soldiers were in fact limited. Thirty percent of the Guardsmen enlisted in the six weeks prior to mobilization in February 1941. Forty-two percent of the 109th Infantry, for example, consisted of soldiers who enlisted in January-February 1941. Actually, the experience level was even lower than these data suggest, for many soldiers joined in October, November, and December of 1940, which certainly did not allow them enough time to gain any but the most rudimentary military knowledge. The press reported as much when the
Lebanon Daily News wrote that the division ranked “no better than a recruit outfit in the eyes of the United States Army,” and that it had to go through thirteen weeks of basic training starting March 10, 1941. Of the 447 soldiers serving a second enlistment or greater, the average year of their first enlistment was 1934. Soldiers with more than a single enlistment comprised just 22 percent of the PNG. At 11 percent, the number of sergeants in the PNG matched the regular Army’s percentage precisely. The PNG contained an uneven leavening of experienced sergeants who did not approach their regular counterparts in terms of expertise.

Even with the prospect of mobilization, numerous PNG soldiers with dependents chose to remain in the service rather than return to their families, suggesting further that patriotism was more important than economic concerns. In February 1941, 157 married soldiers (7.9 percent of the sample) mobilized. National Guard policy allowed men with dependents to avoid the call to active duty by accepting a discharge without penalty, but some still chose to leave their families. One unmarried machinist from Allentown with four dependents may have chosen active duty to retain a guaranteed income, out of patriotic concern for his country, or because the mobilization was scheduled to last only a year. A married laborer from Lyndora joined seven days prior to federalization, without claiming his wife and son as dependents. He may have done so for nationalistic reasons, or he may have filed for divorce on his way to the recruiter. Though the PNG leadership interpreted this behavior as an outgrowth of patriotism, some commanders refused to allow soldiers with dependents to go on active duty. These commanders believed the soldiers had insufficient funds to support their wives and children without the earnings from their civilian jobs and that the soldiers would worry so much about their destitute families that they would be of little use to the Army.

Wives of Pennsylvania Guardsmen were willing to make sacrifices to see that their husbands remained in the Guard. Several signed legal documents testifying that they were financially independent of their husbands. There was no monetary incentive for this action because a private could not make enough money to support a family on his military pay. And again, jobs were becoming more and more available in the civilian sector. Wives who rearranged their lives on behalf of the mobilization impressed Brigadier General Charles A. Curtis of the 213th Coastal Artillery Regiment: “Many, that we thought could not get along, however, showed remarkable ingenuity in cutting corners, and their wives came through 100 percent. Many of the
women are going back to work so their husbands can do their bit for their country." The wife of a machinist in Company K of the 112th Infantry Regiment took an oath that she was not a dependent of her husband when he enlisted two days before Christmas 1940, as did the wife of a salesman who joined on the same day. The salesman's wife stated, however, "It is my desire that my husband shall make proper arrangement to assist in the support of his child and son." While these may have been marital separations, it is more likely that service to the country factored considerably into the decisions of these men and their families. The increasing availability of better paying jobs for women made these decisions possible. On the other hand, the PNG was not going to publicize instances of soldiers resigning from the National Guard in response to pressure from their families.

Another characteristic that distinguished the PNG from the Army was the preponderance of native-born enlistees. Of the 1,988 recruits in the records, less than 1 percent (16) were foreign-born, while another 158 were born outside of the state. During World War I, a full 18 percent of the U.S. Army had been foreign-born. Ninety-two percent of the PNG enlistees were native Pennsylvanians. The PNG maintained the local flavor it so desired in its 1939-1941 recruiting drive.

The enlistment records make one characteristic of the volunteers clear: they were all white. Black Pennsylvanians had tried to join the PNG, but their efforts proved fruitless. In April 1939, Representative Dave E. Satterfield, Jr. of Richmond, Virginia introduced U.S. House Resolution 6046 for two African-American battalions, and Pittsburgh's Herman P. Eberharter proposed to Congress a bill, HR 6467, for an entire black regiment. Nothing came of either effort. In the fall of 1939, Dr. DeHaven Hinkson of the American Legion met with Governor Arthur H. James and proposed the integration of blacks into existing regiments so as to avoid the additional costs of segregated units. The governor replied that this was impossible: "There are certain customs in this country that are beyond law." In September 1940 the Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs promised African-American leaders that it would ask the War Department for the creation of a battalion of black troops for Pennsylvania; General Martin promised to speak with the leader of that initiative before October. Both he and Governor James promised their support. Leadership from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion were all involved in this initiative. The Pennsylvania state convention of the American Legion had passed
a resolution in August calling for the enlistment of blacks in the National Guard and the Army, and in October the national president, Raymond J. Kelly, spoke in West Chester of his goal of "recognition of Negroes in the Army, Navy, and National Guard." The delegation of African-American leaders who met with General Martin on September 12 wanted an integrated battalion. Everett Johnson of the Allied Veterans' Association, an organization of black World War I veterans, advocated enlistment of African Americans in any Pennsylvania National Guard company: "We want representation in the National Guard on the same basis as members of any other racial group, and we're tired of getting a run-around." Martin replied that the War Department forbade integrated units, and that further action depended on the state legislature. Martin could have mentioned the War Department policy prior to their meeting. Because the War Department's policy trumped the ability of Martin and James to integrate the PNG, the two could promise support to black Pennsylvanians knowing full well they were powerless. Martin and James were steadfastly opposed to integration, a position the War Department policy allowed them to obscure.

Efforts in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives a year prior had already failed. On February 28, 1939, Hobson R. Reynolds, the Representative for the 21st District in Philadelphia, made an impassioned plea before the Assembly that in view of the long history of patriotic military service of African Americans, every branch of the United States military should grant them entrance without prejudice. The Chief Clerk referred Reynolds' Resolution No. 22 to the Assembly's Committee on Federal Relations, since Reynolds asked the Assembly to forward it to President Roosevelt and the Secretaries of War and of the Navy, Harry H. Woodring and Claude A. Swanson. The Pennsylvania House adopted the resolution on May 24. In March 1939, State Representative Edwin F. Thompson of Philadelphia's 13th District filed Pennsylvania House Bill 562, "An Act providing for the organization under certain conditions of one colored battalion of infantry; and making an appropriation therefore." Following referral to the Committee on Military Affairs and two readings before the state House, the House placed the bill on the "postponed calendar" on March 29 per Thompson's request. Bill 562 never reached the Pennsylvania Senate, perhaps because everyone realized it had no chance of passing. The initiative might have moved forward if the PNG's leadership desired the inclusion of black Pennsylvanians in its formations, even if in segregated units.

Pennsylvania's complete exclusion of blacks from its National Guard was out of step with its neighbor New Jersey, which at least supported the formation of
segregated detachments. President Roosevelt wanted blacks to make up 10 percent of the Army since they comprised a like percentage of the national population. Consequently the War Department revised its personnel policy so as to fill 10 percent of the Army with African-American men, and mobilized the 372nd Infantry (New Jersey), the 184th Field Artillery, and the 369th Coastal Artillery (Antiaircraft) Regiments, both from Illinois, during the National Guard's mobilization. Likewise, the efforts of black Pennsylvanians to participate more fully in the war effort paralleled other attempts, such as those by black physicians. But like other institutions, such as Selective Service, governmental action at this time did not challenge the status quo on race. So in a broader context, the PNG was in line with the rest of the country. The War Department decided to restrict the few existing black National Guard units to their armories so as to avoid racial conflicts. Indeed, the War Department and PNG policy during World War II was retrograde. African Americans had constituted about 10 percent of the Continental Army during the American Revolution, in integrated regiments. The United States armed forces either ignored or actively resisted racial integration until the Korean War.

Major General Martin had sought a National Guard that was a cross-section of the entire male population of the state, with the unspoken exception of blacks. He spoke of diversity in the ranks as a point of pride: "Your organization must continue to be a cross-section of the communities in which they are stationed." He believed that "the wars of a democracy must be fought by the people." Overall, four male groups were either missing or present in only small numbers in the Pennsylvania National Guard. There were no blacks, very few whites from the lowest economic strata, almost no upper-class whites (nearly all present were clustered in the Philadelphia First City Troop), and a great under-representation of farmers and those from rural areas. While National Guard service was unevenly shared by male Pennsylvanians when the PNG mobilized in 1941, the cross-section among urban white males was quite broad, even if it was not uniform.

Once the War Department began sending conscripts into the 28th Infantry Division in the spring of 1941, it tried to channel men from Pennsylvania into the division. Personnel needs of the Army, however, took precedence over the geographic origin of officers and men. During 1941, Reserve lieutenants from around the country, for example, began to fill officer billets, and by June, more than seven thousand conscripts flooded the Division. Its loss of state character began an inexorable decline, but that mattered only to sentimentalists. The Pennsylvanians found the new conscripts to be an impressive lot:
"They run the gamut from concert artists to truck drivers." The National Guardsmen welcomed the chance to integrate them into their regiments.

The division spent the six months following mobilization at Indiantown Gap trying to master the basics of soldiering. During the fall of 1941, it participated in field maneuvers with other Army and National Guard divisions in North Carolina. The Keystone Division, as it was nicknamed, fought its first battles against the German army in July 1944 following three years of training in Louisiana, Florida, West Virginia, and Great Britain. By then it was Pennsylvanian in name only. Thousands of men from around the country had cycled through its ranks, eroding its distinctiveness as a Pennsylvania institution. By 1944 it was fully a component of the United States Army. Thousands died in the forests of Germany and Belgium during November and December 1944, culminating in its steadfast fighting during the Battle of the Bulge.

The Pennsylvania National Guard's experience highlights both change and continuity in the role of the National Guard in American military policy. Unlike volunteer soldiers before and in recent years, they joined in the absence of fiscal incentives and in the midst of a worsening world crisis and an improving American economy. Volunteering was a financial sacrifice. The localist recruiting efforts appealed to the affinity of individuals for their town and state, but strident political localism was a thing of the past. These soldiers were overwhelmingly urban working class, a great change from the rural farmers of the Civil War era. Another difference with the past was their improved level of education. As was the case during the Civil War in particular, conscription encouraged men to volunteer. Like the rest of the country, the PNG excluded black citizens from its ranks. For that reason its muster rolls did not reach the ideal of military service by a cross-section of the United States' young men. Indeed, the Pennsylvania National Guard at the outset of World War II reflected the values of the majority of Pennsylvanians. The ideal it reached was that of the adjutant general, Major General Edward Martin, and its governor, Arthur H. James.

NOTES

1. Special thanks go to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for a two-month Scholar-in-Residence grant in summer 2000 that made possible thorough research of the enlistment records used in this article.

the Joint Legislative Committee on Aerial Defense of Pennsylvania," July 10, 1940, Record Group 7-31, Committee Hearing Transcripts, Slot 14/4621, Carton 14, Folder "July 10, 1940," Pennsylvania State Archives, Harrisburg (hereafter PSA).


9. Flynn, *The Draft*, 29–43. Benjamin Alpers, "This is the Army: Imagining a Democratic Military in World War II," *Journal of American History* 85 (1998): 135. The boundaries between American social classes are not clearly demarked. For the purposes of this paper, poorly educated unskilled workers—"laborers"—constitute the lower class; those in skilled, white collar, and the professions make up the middle class, of which skilled factory workers constitute the "working class" subset; characteristics of privileged or upper-class men include those from high status neighborhoods, "blue-blood" families, with Ivy League educations and white collar jobs.


14. The Division consisted of several component units: the 53rd, 55th, and 56th Brigades; the 109th, 110th, 111th, and 112th Infantry Regiments; the 107th, 108th, 109th, Field Artillery Regiments (which later became battalions); the 229th Field Artillery Battalion, 103rd Engineers, 103rd Quartermaster Regiment, 103rd Medical Regiment. Components of the Pennsylvania National Guard that were not part of the 28th Infantry Division included the 103rd Observation Squadron, 104th Cavalry Regiment, Headquarters Troop 22nd Cavalry Division, the 166th Field Artillery Battalion, and the 213th Coastal Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft).


18. Major General Emory S. Adams, Adjutant General to Commanding Generals of the Four Armies ... December 28, 1938, Record Group 168, File 353-gen 107, Box 401, Folder 353 General 91–112, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Maryland (hereafter NARA).

19. When a National Guard division is federalized, it moves from under the command of the state governor to that of the President.


25. Record Group 19.124, Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs, Records of Pa. Guardsmen Mustered into WWII, 1940–41, PSA. Because of privacy laws, the author could not write down the names of individual volunteers. That does not detract from the study, for the analysis involves groups of soldiers. The records of the 111th Infantry Regiment are not held in the Archive, which means that Philadelphia, Delaware, and Chester counties are underrepresented in the sample. *Annual Report*
27. Ibid., 204, 221, 223.
29. "News of the 107th Field Artillery" TPG, December 1940, 24; "Old Grey Mare of the 109th Infantry," ibid., 28; ibid., January 1941, 46; "Keep in Scranton's Own," Scranton Times, December [no readable date], 1940; Martin Scrapbook, 24, p. 55, Manuscript Group 156, Papers of Edward Martin, PSA.
31. "Keep in Scranton's Own."
32. "Join the National Guard," Canonsburg Daily, January 23, 1941; Martin Scrapbook 24, p. 67.
34. "Old Grey Mare," TPG, December 1940, 28.
37. Cooke, "Oldest Regiment Issues Call for Volunteers," "Old Grey Mare," December 1940; Lieutenant Colonel E. H. Kohloss, Planning Branch, Memorandum for the Secretary of War, April 30, 1941, Record Group 107, File 322.15–334, Box 143, Folder 327.5, NARA.
41. "Keep in Scranton's Own"; Major General John F. Williams to Adjutant Generals of All States, November 1, 1941, "Enlistments and Reenlistments in National Guard Units in Active Federal Service," Record Group 168, File 325.452, Box 343, Folder 325.452, General 3 Release, NARA.
42. 8th Infantry Division Special Orders 1942, Record Group 19.87, Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs, Unit Personnel Orders File 1925–1975, Slot 2169, Carteron 4, PSA.
43. Lieutenant Colonel F. W. Booye to the Adjutant General, September 27, 1940, RG-168, File 325.452, Box 342, Folder 325.452 General 1, Induction File Part 2, NARA.
44. RG-19.124; "All Penna. Guards Ordered Mobilized," Philadelphia Inquirer, October 20, 1940, Martin Scrapbook, 23, p. 134; Lieutenant Colonel A. V. Wintron to Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, February 17, 1941, RG-168, File 325.4, Box 721, Folder 325.4 1–4, NARA.

867


51. “Let’s Get Together.” Wood was a prominent Philadelphia architect who helped found the “Plattsburgh Movement,” an effort during World War I to provide military training to white collar men. He was also a leader in the formation of the American Legion. By the time his views were published in the October 1940 issue of *The Pennsylvania Guardsman*, Congress had passed the Burke-Wadsworth bill. www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab/app/ar_display.cfm/22511?&Printable=1. Terry Radeke, *The History of the Pennsylvania American Legion* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1993), 3–4. The American Legion supported efforts “to mobilize the entire population”; ibid., 56.


53. Ibid., table 10, p. 23.

54. Ibid.


60. Memorandum for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, [no date, c. 1940] "Chronological Report of Action Taken by the National Guard Bureau," RG-168, File 325.452 NDA Sect 127A Date of Rank of inducted NGO to Index, Box 345, Folder 325.452 General Index, pages 98, 100, NARA.


64. Flynn, The Draft, 234.


68. Major James H. Dailey to the Adjutant General of Pennsylvania, November 21, 1939, RG-19, Slot 14–255, Box 2, PSA.

69. RG-19.124, Slot 14–0260, Carton 5, Folder 13, PSA.

70. Ibid., Slot 14–256, Carton 5, Folder 26.

71. Ibid., Slot 14–2162, Carton 6, Folder 5.


73. RG–19.124.


75. War Department, Table of Organization No. 7, Infantry Division (Square), (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1940), 2.


77. RG-19.124, Slot 14–0258, Carton 3, Folder 22, PSA; Lieutenant Colonel Lloyd D. Brown to Chief, National Guard Bureau, June 18, 1940, RG-168, File 325.451–325.452, Box 342, Folder 325.452 Gen. Ind. File Part 1, NARA.
78. RG-19.124, Slot 14–2162, Carton 6, Folder 5, PSA.
81. "Penna. Guardsmen Balk at Quitting."
82. RG-19.124, Slot 14–2162, Carton 6, Folder 13, PSA.
84. "Color Line in Armed Forces Condemned in Resolution to Legion," Philadelphia Tribune, September 26, 1940, 3. The records do not reveal the names of any of the men who tried to join the Pennsylvania National Guard.
88. Radtke, Pennsylvania African American Legion, 58.
92. Pennsylvania Assembly, Part I, March 20, 1939, 476. Thompson was a veteran private first class who had served on the Western Front. He held a degree from Meharry Dental College in Nashville and belonged to the American Legion. Westbrook, Pennsylvania Manual, 794–95.
94. Pennsylvania Assembly, Part III, 3736–37. The list of bills acted upon went from HB 559 to HB 567, so it would seem that the House let HB 562 die through inaction. Ibid.

98. Flynn, The Draft, 44.

99. Brigadier General F. M. Andrews, Memorandum for the Chief of Staff, July 30, 1940, RG-168, File 325-452, Box 342, Folder 325.452 General 1 Induction File Part 1, NARA.


104. MG John F. Williams to Adjutant Generals in All States, November 1, 1941, “Enlistments and Reenlistments in National Guard Units in Active Service,” RG-168, File 325.452, Box 343, Folder General 3 Release from Active Federal Service, NARA.


108. “VI General Training Policies,” (IV Army Corps), Record Group 407, File IV Corps 204-0 to 204-0.1, Box 3346, NARA.

109. 28th Infantry Division Special Orders 1942, RG-19.87, Slot 14–2169, Carton 4, PSA.